

HOPE

Key Idea: God is the author of hope and the subject of our hope

Opening: Have you ever wished for something? Have each person say three things they would wish for. Wishing for something is different than hope.

Share three adjectives used to describe hope in the New Testament (have family members look up the verses and read aloud):

- "good hope" (2 Thessalonians 2:16)

- "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13)

- "living hope" (1 Peter 1:3)

Share: Hope in the greek is "elphis" meaning favorable and confident expectation

Other uses of hope in the New Testament are:

- dealing with the unseen and the future

- happy anticipation of good

Revisit the key idea: God is the author of hope and the subject of our hope

+Read Psalm 31:24 "Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD."

Pick some discussion questions:

- Who is called to be strong?

- Is this physical strength or emotional strength? What is the difference?

- Describe what emotional strength looks like through a biblical lens.

- How can we develop this type of strength?

- reading God's word

- worshipping God through songs

- prayer

+Read Jeremiah 17:7 "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

Discussion: In the verses leading up to verse 7, Jeremiah shares with the Israelites (God's chosen people) the contrast between a healthy flourishing tree and a tree in a wasteland. A contrast is an opposite.

Questions:

- What does an unhealthy tree look like?

- Why/how does a tree/plant become unhealthy?

Describe what a healthy tree needs to survive:

- water

- good soil

- sunlight

Share: Our spiritual lives also need key ingredients to survive:

- foremost a Savior to save us and forgive us from our sins
- prayer to communicate regularly with God
- intentional time in God's word
- a renewed mind focused on godly wisdom and truths

Share: We have hope in the Lord because of Jesus' death on the cross. He has saved us from this wasteland (our sin). We also have hope because one day Christ will triumphantly return.

No matter our circumstances we can trust in God and know that He is in control, He knows what is best, and He loves us.

Listen and worship together as a family (or read through an excerpt of the song) to "Living Hope" by Phil Wickham

How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation, I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness, Your lovingkindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished, the end is written
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope...

+Read 1 Peter 1:3 "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection for the dead."

Pray together as a family: Dear Lord, Thank You for being our hope. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus to die on the cross for our sins and for sending the Holy Spirit to be our comforter and counselor. May we cling to You in certain and uncertain times knowing that we have hope because of You. In Your precious Son's name, Jesus, Amen

Family Activities: Pick one or more activities to do together to reflect and continue engagement in the concept of hope

- Memorize 1 Peter 1:3 or one of the verses about hope
- Create an art project with markers/crayons or construction paper cutouts contrasting a flourishing tree and a wasteland tree from the Jeremiah passage
- Write messages sharing the hope of Jesus (letters, texts, social media posts) to send to others
- Use tissue paper and contact paper to create a "stained glass" cross or the word hope for a symbolic/visual reminder of our Living Hope, hang in a window
- Use 3x5 cards or expo markers to display/write verses of hope on mirrors to continue renewing our minds toward the message of hope

Take pictures and share with us on Facebook & Instagram

tagging us @lincolnpresbyterian & hashtags #LPCFamily #ConnectwithLincoln #LivingHope